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Remarks

By this amendment, claims 1, 10, and 11 are revised and claim 9 is canceled to place this application in condition for allowance. Currently, claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 10, and 11 are before the Examiner for consideration on their merits. Claims 3, 6, and 8 are withdrawn from consideration.

In the rejection, the Examiner has raised issues of indefiniteness with respect to claims 10 and 11. These issues are overcome by the revisions to these claims. First, the second recitation of door on line 2 of the claim is preceded by "the" to make it clear that said door refers to the "door" in line 1 of said claim.

The language used in claim 1 to describe the position of the façade is now inserted into claim 10. Since this language is considered to be definite in claim 1, it would be also definite in claim 10.

Lastly, the dependency of claim 11 is corrected to claim 4 so that there is proper antecedent basis for "angle."

In light of these revisions, the rejection based on 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph should be withdrawn.

In response to the prior art rejection, claims 1 and 10 are revised to include the limitations of claim 9 therein. More particularly, the man-machine interface is now defined as including one or more of machine instrumentation or control means.

Turning now to the outstanding rejections, the revisions to claims 1 and 10 remove the rejection based on Laby since Laby was not cited against claim 9. This leaves the rejection based on Shin.

In the rejection of claim 9, the Examiner took the position that Shin taught the claimed man-machine interface as the handle 303 in the front door 301. The reasoning given in the remarks section of the final rejection is that the handle provides "means for enable (sic) a person to interface with the washing machine, i.e., opening and closing the door 300. Additionally, the handle comprises a control means since it provides a means for controlling the operation of the door 300."

By including the limitations of claim 9 into claims 1 and 10, one issue of patentability boils down to whether Shin includes a man-machine interface that includes one or more of machine instrumentation and control means. A sub-issue for resolution is whether the Examiner's interpretation is a reasonable one that permits the reliance on a handle in the door of Shin to be considered a man-machine interface.

While the Examiner is entitled to give the claim terms their broadest reasonable meaning, it is argued by Applicant that defining a man-machine interface including one or more of machine instrumentation and control means cannot be interpreted to be merely the handle in the door of a washing machine.

First, a reasonable interpretation of man-machine interface would require an interface linking a man and a machine. The opening 303 in the door of Shin is not an interface between a man and a machine since a door, by any interpretation, cannot be

considered to be a machine. This alone precludes the Examiner from alleging that Shin teaches the claimed invention.

It is further contended that the opening 303 in the door of the washing machine of Shin is not a control means that is part of a man-machine interface. Claims 1 and 10 define a man-machine interface, and then further define it as including a control means. No reasonable interpretation of the claims would result in the conclusion that the opening in the door of Shin is a control means that is part of a man-machine interface.

Moreover, the opening cannot even be properly interpreted to be a control means as claimed. The opening 303 is just that, a recess in a panel. It is a static structure that performs no control on its own, and clearly not as a control means which is part of a man-machine interface. The control associated with the opening 303 is in the form of the person desiring to opening the door by engaging the opening with the fingers of the person's hand.

Besides the flaw in the rejection with respect to the position that the man-machine interface and control means is met by the opening 303 in the panel 301 of Shin, there are other flaws in the rejection by reason of the Examiner failing to consider all of the claim limitations.

Claims 1 and 10 also define a façade of the man-machine interface. While the Examiner contends that the façade of the man-machine interface is disclosed in Shin, there is no specific reference to what is the claimed façade in the teachings of Shin. In fact, the Examiner has not identified what exactly is the claimed façade, and the Examiner is called upon to substantiate the anticipation rejection in this regard. In

order to reject claims 1 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), Shin must teach all of the claimed limitations.

Second, the claim calls for a reception structure that has the man-machine mounted thereto. The Examiner alludes to a reception structure in Figure 5, alleging that the man-machine interface 303 is mounted to the reception structure. However, the opening 303 is formed in the panel 301 which the Examiner already interprets as the claimed "mobile panel". In actuality, the Examiner has not identified a "reception structure" as part of the claimed mobile panel as is recited in both of claims 1 and 10.

The Examiner must show that each and every element of the claim is found in Shin to support the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). The failure to establish the presence of the façade and reception structure taints the rejection such that it must be withdrawn.

To summarize, it is Applicants' contention that the Examiner has failed to establish a *prima facie* case of anticipation against claims 1 and 10 as amended, and that the rejection must be withdrawn.

While this amendment is presented after a final rejection, no new issues are raised by the amendment since the limitations inserted into claims 1 and 10 are those already considered in claim 9. Thus, at the very least, if the Examiner maintains the rejection, the amendments should be entered for purposes of appeal.

Also, since claim 1 is generic and allowable, the Examiner is requested to withdraw the restriction requirement as applied to claims 3, 6, and 8, and these claims should be passed onto issuance with the other allowable claims.

Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to examine this application and pass claims 1-8, 10, and 11 onto issuance.

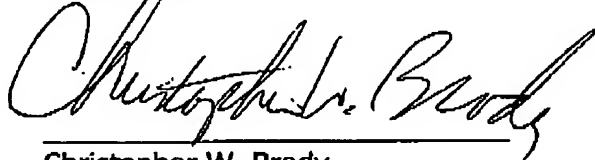
If the Examiner believes that an interview with Applicants' attorney would be helpful in expediting allowance of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned at 202-835-1753.

The above constitutes a complete response to all issues raised in the Office Action dated June 29, 2006.

Again, reconsideration and allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

Applicants respectfully submit that there is no fee required for this submission, however, please charge any fee deficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1088.

Respectfully submitted,
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